

COMMENDING OAK PARK, ILLINOIS, ON 150 YEARS OF TOWNSHIP GOVERNMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, 150 years ago in 1849, Oak Park, Illinois was just 10 years old, with a total population of less than 500 people.

There were no streets lined with Frank Lloyd Wright architecture. There was no elevated train system for rapid transit to the City of Chicago. There was no light bulb, no telephone or automobile. No one had heard of the computer, Internet, or e-mail.

□ 1945

In 1849, township as a local form of government was established in Illinois, and since then, voters in 85 of Illinois' 102 counties have benefited from this most intimate form of government.

Today, Oak Park is a thriving community of more than 53,000 people, known for its architectural heritage. Within its 4.5 square miles lives a diverse mix of people with different cultures, races and ethnicities, professions, lifestyles, religions, ages and incomes.

Primarily a residential community bordering the city of Chicago, Oak Park is the birthplace and childhood home of novelist Ernest Hemingway. An annual festival has traditionally been held to celebrate his July birth date.

Architect Frank Lloyd Wright lived in Oak Park from 1889 to 1909, and 25 buildings in the village were designed by him, including his first public building, Unity Temple, a Unitarian Universalist church. His restored home and studio is open for daily hours, and there are many architecturally significant homes ranging from Victorian to prairie style in the village's two historic districts.

Other famous Oak Parkers include Edgar Rice Burroughs, the creator of Tarzan; Dr. Percy B. Julian, an outstanding African American chemist whose research led to the development of cortisone; Joseph Kerwin, an astronaut on the first NASA Skylab team; Ray Kroc, the founder of McDonald's; and Marjorie Judith Vincent, the 1991 Miss America.

Oak Park is also home to former president of the Illinois Senate and recently appointed chairman of the Illinois Board of Higher Education, the honorable Phillip Rock.

The Oak Park River Forest High School is recognized as one of the best public high schools in the Nation, Fenwick is an outstanding Catholic school, and the city is currently involved in the redevelopment of downtown Oak Park with new retail anchors and an intermodal transportation facility.

In 1968, the village board approved one of the Nation's first local fair housing ordinances outlawing discrimination. In 1973, the board approved its first Oak Park diversity statement; and, in 1976, Oak Park was designated an all-American city.

One thing that has not changed in Oak Park during the past 150 years is the person-to-person service provided by township officials and township government in Illinois. When Illinois voters chose township government, they chose the oldest form of government on the North American continent. The Pilgrims brought the concept of township government with them when they landed on the eastern seaboard in 1636. More than a century before the Revolutionary War, townships were giving communities a local and independent voice in matters of government and order.

Today, as we prepare to move into the 21st century, government in Illinois still thrives. More than 8 million Illinoisans are served by the 1,433 townships in the State. This year, on April 3rd, townships held their annual meetings, which is unique to this form of government, where any citizen can step up to the plate and voice any concern that they have about the government. In this regard, townships are truly the government closest to the people they govern as they continue to provide functions and services which are vitally important.

I take this moment after 150 years to commend and congratulate the people of Oak Park, Illinois, for demonstrating that democracy can be made real and that township government can in fact and does in fact work.

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that I be given the time of the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. HULSHOF) and that he be given my time on the list so that I can resume my place in the chair following the 5-minute special order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Tennessee?

There was no objection.

AIR FORCE BOONDOGGLES COST TAXPAYERS BILLIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, last week it was reported by the Associated Press that an Air Force communications satellite worth \$800 million had ended up in the wrong orbit. This was the third failure in a row for the Air Force Titan IV program, at a total loss to the taxpayers of over \$3 billion. This latest satellite not only ended up in the

wrong orbit, it ended up in a lopsided orbit thousands of miles below its intended orbit.

I have taken the floor many times over the years to point out examples of wasteful or exorbitant Federal spending. John Martin has for several years had a segment called It's Your Money on the ABC national television news, pointing out almost every week some example of horrible Federal waste. He has performed a great service to this Nation in bringing this series to the attention of the American people.

The examples, unfortunately, are far too easy to find. Examples of ridiculously wasteful Federal spending are everywhere. It has made me wonder if the Federal Government can do anything in an efficient or economical way.

But this Titan IV program really takes the cake. Three failures at a cost of \$3 billion; \$3 billion down the drain.

What really adds insult to injury, Mr. Speaker, is that, because this is the Federal Government, no one will really be held accountable for this. In the private sector if a company had three major failures like this, heads would roll in a big way. Of course, in the private sector, no company could afford \$3 billion in failures unless possibly it was a big-time Federal contractor subsidized by the taxpayer.

The Appropriation Committees of the House and Senate should demand accountability here. They should not stand for \$3 billion from three failed launches.

But the easiest thing in the world, Mr. Speaker, is to spend other people's money. So what are we going to do? Thursday we are going to give big increases in pay and pensions and funding for the same Air Force that has sat around and allowed this \$3 billion in failures to occur.

Federal employees are great at rationalizing or justifying even ridiculous losses. I am sure that the Air Force will have some great excuses, and everyone connected with this will be able to explain why it was not their fault. Well, somebody is at fault and probably several people, and they should lose their jobs over this.

Even though we talk about a billion dollars up here like it was very little, \$3 billion is still an awful lot of money. This satellite, as I said earlier, cost \$800 million. Last Friday's mission alone cost \$1.23 billion. Just think how much good could have been done with the total \$3 billion in losses in this Titan IV Air Force program.

Now, I favor a strong military and I believe we should have a strong Air Force, but I do not believe we should just sit back and allow any part of the military to throw away \$3 billion. We should not just cavalierly accept this.

Several years ago, Edward Rendell, the Democratic Mayor of Philadelphia, said at a congressional hearing, "Government does not work because it was